

Kentucky Adult Education Advisory Committee
Minutes
March 14, 2008

Members in attendance: Vicki Boyd, S.J. Brennan, Cris Crowley, Joan Flanery, Veronica Gayle, Kathryn Hardman, Pam Hatton, Renae Harrison, Rodney Johnson, Karen McLeod, Sandy Moore, Peg Russell, Julie Scoskie, Bev Thomson, Sugar Willey.

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Sarah Hawker welcomed members and reviewed the agenda. She noted in the December meeting there was discussion about scheduling a follow-up meeting to discuss professional development. However, due to several factors and since we felt all members' input was valuable, we elected to use part of this meeting to continue the discussion.

Ms. Hawker noted Marilyn Lyons has conducted research of other state professional development systems, their structure, what they offer and tying it to outcomes.

Meryl Becker-Prezocki is going to give an update on the Professional Development Practitioner Team meeting. This is a group of instructors who advise KYAE on professional development issues. Our professional development partners – the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development, the Kentucky Institute for Family Literacy and the Morehead Academy staff joined the meeting.

Ms. Becker-Prezocki is also going to give an update on content standards.

Reecie Stagnolia is going to give a budget update.

We're going to look at performance data. This is a critical area. We want to review this with you and take the opportunity to look at the data and connect it to professional development – identifying issues, questions, or ideas that the data pose to us.

In this year of transition and also from your past experience, what has really worked in achieving student outcomes? You've had a chance to try some different things. What's worked? What's not worked? What are you going to try? What are you thinking about? What do you think might really make a difference?

Ms. Hawker reviewed some key points of discussion from the last meeting.

- Need professional development that is an inch wide and a mile deep
- Reluctance to invest in training for new employees
- Time and travel costs
- Program professional development needs change, students change, the economy changes
- Professional development on how to teach and manage multi-level classrooms
- Format and scheduling – videos, regional versus state, possible shut down time for training
- Perhaps count June trainings into next year's professional development count
- Multiple people from one program attend a training to support one another
- Reflection pools
- Self directed activities (SDA) improve research-based activity buy-in
- Part-time teachers need evening trainings
- Set schedule ahead to help with planning
- More training in the summer

- Do instructional assistants need as much professional development if it isn't relevant to the position?
- Teacher training needs – multi-level ESL, transitioning to postsecondary education – professional development on what to teach, not how to teach; how to teach test taking skills; how to teach students with learning disabilities
- Program director professional development needs
 - How to provide job-embedded professional development
 - Help some directors accept new strategies and policies
 - Directors need interaction with other directors – KYAE planning a program director institute
 - Professional development on administrative functions
 - Encourage director buy-in for teacher professional development, see it as a long-term investment
 - Professional development on how to use data to plan individual teacher professional development
 - There was a question that perhaps we need to trust program directors to know what their program needs rather than prescribing what is required.

Professional Development Research

Marilyn Lyons reported she used three data categories to identify those states similar to Kentucky. The categories were overall characteristics of the state, economy of the state, and the need for adult education. She looked at variables within each data category.

The variables within state characteristics were total population, rate of population growth and urban versus rural population. Based upon total population, Kentucky is most similar to Oklahoma, South Carolina, Colorado, Alabama and Louisiana. Based upon population growth, Kentucky is most similar to Indiana, Maine, Oklahoma, and Missouri. In the urban versus rural population category, Kentucky is similar to South Dakota, Arkansas, Montana, Alabama, North Dakota, New Hampshire, North Carolina and South Carolina.

The variables within the state economy category were median household income and employment ratios. Based upon median household income, Kentucky is most similar to Oklahoma, Alabama, Louisiana, Tennessee, Montana and New Mexico. For employment ratios, Kentucky is similar to Louisiana, Alabama, Arkansas, South Carolina, Michigan, New Mexico and Tennessee.

The variables within the state's need for adult education category were population 18 and older without a high school diploma or GED, the high school dropout rate and the population at Literacy Levels I and II. Those most similar to Kentucky for this category are Alabama, Arkansas, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and West Virginia.

Two additional data indicators reviewed were the percent of the population that does not speak English well and the teen birth rate. For the population that does not speak English well, Kentucky is most similar to Mississippi, South Dakota and Arkansas. Based upon teen birth rate, Kentucky is similar to Delaware, North Carolina, Louisiana, Alabama, Nevada, South Carolina and Georgia.

When taking all of the data into consideration, she identified several states for further review based upon those with data identical to Kentucky, similar to Kentucky and least like Kentucky. Ms. Lyons relied on Websites and research articles about professional development to determine what professional development looks like in these states. Factors researched were accountability,

delivery system, format, manuals, requirements prior to delivering instruction, SDA and collaboration, and standards.

States similar in all categories to Kentucky are Alabama, Louisiana, Oklahoma and South Carolina.

- Alabama has a statewide transitions program and instructor certification.
- Louisiana has professional development standards, is involved in a Health Education Literacy Program (HELP), has a State Literacy Resource Center, has intensive summer institutes, has instructor certification and has content standards.
- Oklahoma's Website is under construction, but she determined they have instructor certification and content standards.
- South Carolina has regional professional development centers, an incentive program for graduate courses and instructor certification.

States similar to Kentucky in three to five categories are Arkansas, Mississippi, Tennessee and West Virginia.

- Arkansas requires new hires to have a minimum of a Master's degree. They offer professional development online (AE Pro) and have an Arkansas Education Service Cooperative. They have a Web-based professional development tracking system. They have instructor certification and offer a program director credential.
- Mississippi has instructor certification. Ms. Lyons noted she was unable to glean much more from the Website, since a password was required to access most areas.
- Tennessee has three professional development levels, has teacher support networks, offers online adult education professional development (AE Pro), has a Web-based professional development tracking system, and has major annual training events – Leadership Summit, Academy for Instructional Excellence and Regional Instructional Workshops.
- West Virginia has an adult basic education pre-service training requirement, annual core in-service trainings and requires fulfillment of core trainings before participating in elective in-service trainings, peer trainers, a Web-based professional development tracking system and intensive instructor and program director manuals.

States least like Kentucky are Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Ohio, North Carolina and Texas.

- Colorado has instructor, content and professional development standards, utilizes SDAs and collaboration for curriculum development, is involved in health literacy initiatives, has a Web-based professional development tracking system and has regional centers. Ms. Lyons noted Colorado has an excellent Website.
- Florida has curriculum frameworks, content standards, is involved in health literacy initiatives, has learning activity resource guides and offers online professional development through the Florida TechNet Web-based Training.
- Georgia is involved in a health literacy pilot project and has certified literate community programs. Ms. Hawker noted KYAE discussed with state economic development partners the possibility of creating certified literacy community programs and while there was interest, there was not the existing expertise to accomplish it.
- Illinois has regional service centers, guides to assist program directors and a resource library for lesson plans. Ms. Lyons noted Illinois has an excellent Website. One interesting accountability aspect is that after each professional development training, the training is evaluated by participants with all comments posted on the Website.
- Ohio has regional resource centers, individual and program professional development plans, has professional development requirements dependent upon service time, mandates 12 statewide training days and uses self assessment as the basis for professional development. She noted in Ohio a staff person is not permitted to attend a national conference until they have been employed three years full-time in adult education and cannot attend a state conference until employed two years full-time in adult education.

- North Carolina is involved in an adult basic education professional development project with Appalachian State University, offers professional development via the North Carolina online project and is involved in a basic skills instructor certification project.
- Texas has pre-service training, offers professional development regionally, has instructor and director manuals and handbooks, sets short- and long-term professional development goals, has a database for tracking, and has professional development requirements linked to rehire. If you don't meet the professional development requirements, you are not rehired the next year.

It was noted two states used AE Pro to offer online professional development. AE Pro is a third-party product developed by Ohio and Tennessee. Other states must pay to use it. It is expensive, but provides accountability through an online facilitator.

Once states have established instructor, content and professional development standards, they tend to move into health and financial literacy arenas. Most states are facing the same challenge as Kentucky in how to professionalize adult education and how to pay people accordingly.

There was discussion of identifying best practices from other states that could best work in Kentucky. These states have gone through the obstacles, and we can learn from their experiences.

There was interest expressed regarding South Carolina's support of graduate courses. Ms. Lyons noted there was a set amount for full-time employees who have been employed for more than one year. It is grade dependent and must be related to the job.

Advisory Committee members asked if professional development funds could be used for this purpose in Kentucky. Kathryn Hardman indicated she uses incentive funds to pay tuition when the staff person earns an A or B. Terry Pruitt and Reecie Stagnolia agreed professional development funds could not be used for this purpose, but incentive funds could be used. Julie Scoskie asked if programs could use both program and student incentive funds for this purpose. Mr. Pruitt confirmed KYAE has not set guidelines that differentiate uses of program or student incentive funds.

There are additional key considerations to keep in the forefront of our minds, because they are related to professional development. The key considerations were divided into two groups – professional standards – instructor/program director certification and instructor/program director standards – and instructional tools – content standards, curriculum.

Student outcomes were divided into two areas: NRS and GED. For NRS, Ms. Lyons looked at total enrollment, educational level gains and the educational level gains as a percent of the population in need. For GED, she looked at total GED graduates and GED graduates as a percent of population in need.

Ms. Lyons graphed data elements for states similar to Kentucky, slightly similar to Kentucky and least like Kentucky. She noted there seems to be a correlation between state professional development efforts and student outcomes. What we don't know is when the professional development elements were put into place, because it takes time for initiatives to translate into outcomes.

Ms. Becker-Prezocki distributed a state map to members. Ms. Lyons asked members to identify those things from other states' professional development offerings that impressed them today, what works in their regions, and what works in the state. Overall, if you could be in charge of professional development, what would it look like?

Karen McLeod noted Renae Harrison and she were discussing this topic prior to the meeting and agreed they would first need to know federal guidelines.

Ms. Lyons asked members not to think about monetary limitations, but rather to identify what we want or need.

Reecie Stagnolia indicated 12.5 percent of federal adult education funds are to be set aside for state leadership activities. State leadership activities cover several categories including professional development. In Kentucky, we tend to focus the \$1.1 million in state leadership funds on professional development.

Cris Crowley asked Ms. Lyons which of the states most similar to Kentucky demographically had, in her opinion, the best student outcomes and results. Ms. Lyons answered Tennessee and West Virginia.

Ms. Crowley commented we are looking for better results, but those states have similar results to Kentucky. Ms. Lyons noted most state outcomes are tending to go up. Many initiatives discussed above were implemented in FY 2004-05, so it will take time to translate to increased outcomes, but we do know other states' numbers are increasing.

Ms. Lyons encouraged members not to focus just on what a similar state is doing.

Ms. Scoskie identified a need for just-in-time delivery of professional development. She has new instructors throughout the year, not just in the summer.

Bev Thomson noted she liked the idea of an intensive Math Institute, but said she would have to close the program in order to have staff participate. Ms. Thomson also liked the idea of new teachers receiving professional development before going into the classroom. She suggested we find out how the other states do this.

Ms. Hawker asked members to focus on the high level of what we want and need. Once we know what we want and need, then we can figure out how to make it work by learning from states that have already implemented the strategy.

Ms. Scoskie noted most of the intensive professional development is wonderful for full-time instructors, but most Jefferson County instructors are part-time. There was discussion about different requirements for full-time versus part-time instructors.

Karen McLeod was intrigued by the idea of different requirements based upon the number of years employed.

Several members supported peer mentoring to pair new instructors with trained instructors. It was recommended that an instructor should go through regimented training to be a certified peer mentor. There was also a suggestion that a one-time stipend be offered to someone serving as a mentor.

Members again supported local program director choice of professional development training. Ms. Lyons noted that in those states that give program directors more discretion in determining professional development, it is heavily documented and monitored at regional service centers.

It was discussed that, increasingly, individuals are signing up for trainings, taking slots available for others, but who do not show up for the training. There was a discussion of possibly charging for "no

shows.” Ms. Hardman noted the Laurel County GED Testing Center does not refund the GED test fee if an examinee doesn’t show up.

Ms. Scoskie expressed interest in other states’ professional development tracking systems. Ms. Lyons indicated some states’ systems are separate, like our systems. Other state systems are linked to student data systems to allow states to monitor student outcomes and professional development.

Members were given a few minutes to identify what they would like to see for Kentucky’s professional development system. Meryl Becker-Prezocki collected the maps.

Professional Development Practitioner Team Update

Ms. Becker-Prezocki reported that members of the team are instructors with a strong professional development base. The last meeting focused on attendance, accountability, and professional development plans.

As noted in a recent issue of News to Use, KYAE has become concerned about the number of cancellations and no shows. The group discussed various means to deal with this growing problem.

In the area of accountability, there was a suggestion to send monthly reports to program directors to help them better plan, and to monitor who will be out for professional development. The group also discussed ways to demonstrate that professional development benefits a program by helping the staff perform at a higher level.

When discussing options, the team preferred to have a “menu” of training options including various state and regional workshops or conferences and online courses. It was also suggested that SDAs be encouraged. The group discussed ways to share results of SDAs with others.

For professional development plans, the team recommended looking at the professional development needs for full-time versus part-time instructors and the professional development requirements for each group. In addition, the group discussed ways to make PDtrack smoother and more helpful for those at the local level.

The team also reviewed instructor standards drafted by the KYAE Teacher Quality Work Group and looked at ways to tie professional development to those standards.

Content Standards Update

Ms. Becker-Prezocki indicated Gayle Box and she focused first on developing content standards for Math Level 4 which they determined to be the area of greatest need. Some guiding principals followed were the standards needed to be aligned to TABE, connected to real life, have an easy-to-use design and must have policies regarding use of the standards by both instructors and students. They must also identify skills needed to transition successfully to postsecondary education.

Their work involved various internal work groups and KYAE leadership, and Ms. Box made a presentation to the Foundations for Math Group. Ms. Becker-Prezocki and Gayle Box attended recent regional meetings to discuss content standards. Attendees took part in an activity to review various design formats for the standards and to give feedback to KYAE. Ms. Becker-Prezocki indicated the meetings involved 141 persons representing 104 counties.

She noted more information will be shared about instructor standards and math content standards in the future.

Budget Update

Reecie Stagnolia gave an update on House Bill 406, the budget bill. In November, he reported the Council's budget request proposed a \$2 million increase in each year of the biennium. The Governor's budget presented in January included a 12 percent reduction (\$3 million) in base funding. KYAE is encouraged by House action to restore \$1.5 million of the funds resulting in a six percent cut in base funding. He noted these are tough budget times, and other agencies have not fared as well. The budget is now in the Senate. Since the Senate has long been equally as supportive of adult education, we hope they, too, will support the \$1.5 million restoration. KYAE had a three percent budget cut, \$800,000, in the current fiscal year and was able to absorb it internally. The calculations for next year's cut were based on the previous baseline not the revised base with the three percent cut.

Mr. Stagnolia noted the positive impact of recent advocacy efforts and thanked the Kentucky Association for Adult and Continuing Education (KAACE) and Julie Scoskie, KAACE President, for leadership in that area.

FY 2009 Grant Update

Janet Hoover gave an update on the RFP process. She noted seven teams are busy reading proposals and holding team meetings. KYAE hopes to make announcements in early April via e-mail if the proposal is approved, if the review team had questions or concerns and requested additional information, or if an application is not approved. If necessary, we anticipate the re-bid process would begin mid-April. If there are identified concerns with responses needed, programs would be given a week or two to respond.

Performance Update

Committee members were given state performance reports run on January 7 and March 11. Mr. Stagnolia noted the redesigned format is more user friendly and intuitive and will help a county to see at any given time how the county and the state fairs toward achieving the enrollment goal and GED target. He reminded members that for FY2008, counties do not have a GED goal, just a target; however, KYAE has a state GED goal.

When looking at the January report, Kentucky has 7,000 fewer people in NRS levels than last year. This represents a 33 percent decline.

The GED target is possibly on pace at 60 percent of the target by January.

He pointed out that at this time we are not on track to meet federal NRS performance goals, which means the state would not be eligible for Workforce Investment Act (WIA) incentive funds. For the past two years, KYAE has been the state agency that failed to meet federal performance goals, thus preventing the state from receiving WIA incentive funds. He commented that we need to focus our attention on the areas of lowest performance and target professional development efforts to those areas.

He advised the Office of Vocational and Adult Education requires continuous improvement and will not allow a state to set a percentage goal equal to or lower than the previous year's result. Kentucky had success in earlier years which led to increased federal performance goals. Kentucky has failed

to meet federal goals for the past two years. As a result, KYAE was able to negotiate the FY 2007-08 percentage points down 68 points from the FY 2006-07 levels. At this point in time, however, the state is 79 points below the FY 2007-08 goal.

The New Framework for Adult Education reflects a focus on quality rather quantity. How do we create an awareness of the issues and the importance of striving to meet the federal goals? It is important to finish strong.

Renae Harrison asked which was more important for KYAE to meet – the percentage goal or the enrollment number.

Mr. Stagnolia indicated from the federal perspective, the percentage is more important.

Bev Thomson noted low enrollment numbers in lower levels make it harder to attain the goal. If only two people are enrolled in ABE Level 1, both individuals (100 percent) would need to complete Level 1 in order to achieve the 54 percent goal.

Ms. Harrison pointed out over 8,000 individuals were enrolled in NRS levels between January and March. At this time progress tests have not been administered for these individuals, so it will take time to demonstrate level gains. Other members agree that at this time in the year they have not done a lot of post-testing, so it will be later before a true picture emerges.

Sarah Hawker noted we need to focus not on how to explain the decline, but rather on our commitment to quality and determine how we get there. She reiterated, in comparing the number of students enrolled in NRS levels, Kentucky has over 7,000 less enrolled in NRS levels than we did last year when there were higher enrollment goals. What would be most helpful to reverse the downward trend? Are there professional development solutions? Is it qualifications? Is it leadership? What is needed at the local level? What is needed at the state level? The House has made a great leap of faith in supporting a six percent funding restoration, and we need to prove that faith was justified.

The general consensus of members was they have seen good things relating to professional development late in the year. In addition, the transition year has given programs the opportunity to try many new things – some of which worked and some which failed. We may not see the fruits of our labor until next year, because it takes time for new strategies to translate into results.

Members agreed it is important for each program to be aware not only of the individual program needs and data, but also of the current state status.

Julie Scoskie suggested possibly looking at what is the easiest goal to meet and focus attention on that goal. For example, communication from KYAE indicating we only need “X” number of people to upgrade in a certain area to achieve that state goal.

It is also important to make all staff aware, not just program directors, of the linkage between meeting federal goals and funding. Members suggested sending information via News to Use to help local staff understand how not meeting NRS goals impacts funding for not only the state, but also the individual staff person. What does it mean if we don’t meet the goals? It was suggested KYAE outline the challenge facing us in meeting this year’s goals. It is important that the field hear that adult education has failed to meet performance goals for two years and has fallen down on its responsibility and has thus prevented adult education as well as other state partners for being eligible for WIA incentive funds. There is pride in the field; we want adult education to look good.

Most are aware of the situation for a specific class or for their program, but they don't see the state view impact.

Ms. Harrison said her staff knows she is reviewing statistics by instructor, and they know if the funding is cut, someone has to go.

There was a suggestion to focus professional development on retention. If students come to class, they will make progress.

There was discussion on low ESL numbers. One member indicated attendance was so sporadic that students were going backwards when post-tested. They tried to move to a managed enrollment program and advertised for four weeks about the availability of ESL programming two nights a week, but no one came. When looking at the data and the limited resources, they questioned whether it is better to have no ESL program than an ineffective one.

Suggestions included offering weekend programming or perhaps to show students the value of ESL services by getting them "hooked" via health literacy.

Ms. Hawker has talked with a local nursery owner who hires workers with work visas. The employer houses them. They work long hours. The employer indicated there were two needs: a Spanish speaking church and ESL instruction. The employer indicated willingness to give employees a limited number of hours of release time per week for ESL instruction if the instructor could come to the workers.

Sugar Willey indicated employer outreach is key to convincing employers of the value of ESL services for their workers. Ms. Hawker asked Ms. Willey to write an article on this topic for a future issue of News to Use.

Best Practices

Ms. Hawker noted she was excited to hear about strategies local programs have tried during this transition year to improve student outcomes. We want to hear about what's worked as well as those things you've tried that didn't work. We know we don't know everything and outcomes are dependent upon individual demographics, but other programs may benefit from your experiences.

Julie Scoskie reported Jefferson County has developed a student orientation video to help structure the intake process and to foster retention by advising students in easy terms of what they can expect as well as expectations for them when they come to adult education. The video is posted on GED4u.com.

Jefferson County has also initiated a new teacher orientation program in which a master teacher mentors new instructors for 12 hours.

Sugar Willey agreed with structured orientation and managed classes, but Woodford County also works to maintain flexible scheduling for new students. When new students come to the program, they are assessed and staff work with them individually until they catch up and can be placed into a structured class. With the lower functioning levels, they have 8-10 in a class. They try to do a GED Fast Track class with three to four weeks focused on math plus four weeks as an overall refresher. She noted being flexible enough to change mid stream is important.

Bev Thomson reported Christian County has implemented managed enrollment and structured class times with a GED math class of 12-15 people taking the class every four weeks. Students must

function at a minimum of the 6th grade level and attend class in the mornings Monday through Thursday. Instruction on other GED subjects – general science, reading, social studies and writing – is offered on a rotating basis. She noted scheduled classes for low-level readers have not been as successful.

Pam Hatton noted Boone County took managed enrollment a step further and attempted to have structured classes. This didn't work, because they were unable to get enough students to come at the schedule times. They are doing learning labs. A promising new practice Boone County has implemented is case management to improve retention. Staff are responsible not only for calls and letters, but also to get to know individual students and the barriers they face. Each staff person has a case load to manage.

Boone County has also implemented an accelerated GED prep class for high level ABE/GED students. It is time-intensive for two weeks with one week to tie up any loose ends. The student is ready to test by the fourth week. Students know if they come in at a certain functional level and commit to the schedule, they can be ready to test after three weeks.

Renae Harrison reported Hardin County tried offering an afternoon class with all instruction provided through technology – such as DVD players with instructional videos and a Nintendo with brain games – thinking younger students would enjoy it, but it failed.

They then created a Jump Start program in which new enrollees are placed with a certain teacher for 12 hours during the first week of attendance. Instruction is provided via the CTB-McGraw Hill Contemporary ITTS System (Instruction Targeted for TABE Success). This system is highly interactive; it gives immediate feedback to the student, and will exit if there is no activity for five minutes. After 12 hours, the student is re-evaluated and sent into a classroom. This process has helped with student retention, because the student builds a relationship with the instructor and with co-students who enrolled at the same time, and the student can see a measurable gain within a week. They tried to offer this program in the evenings with limited success, but once it was moved to mornings, it is working well.

Kathryn Hardman reported Laurel County is using managed enrollment. She indicated she would like to move beyond managed enrollment to a closed class schedule with pre-determined start and end times and dates.

A couple of years ago, Laurel County received United Way funding for GED test fees. If a student makes at least 450 on two different math practices tests, the United Way grant pays the test fee. The pass rate percentage for those meeting the higher OPT standard is in the mid-80s. The pass rate percentage for those who do not meet the higher OPT standard is in the low-60s. The message conveyed to students is we want them not to take the test, but to pass it. This process levels the playing field for students. It gives everyone the opportunity to have free testing based on higher standards rather than financial hardship.

Ms. Hardman indicated Laurel County operates a separate class for those 16-18 years of age. Most in the class are court-ordered to attend, so she met with the local judge to have the judge order them to attend on the program's schedule. This has worked well, because this group may be intimidating to older clients, and they require a highly structured environment.

She noted that Laurel County holds an annual community trivia contest as a fundraiser. Local business teams participate. There are five topics with ten questions per topic. This year's theme is "Are you as smart as a GED graduate?" They fund two \$500 college scholarships from proceeds.

Another strategy is to give students extra incentives to reach goals. The program has a rolling barrel filled with boxes. Each box contains a prize; some as small as a coupon for a soda or candy bar, some with gasoline cards, and one box has an I-Pod. Each time a student goes up an NRS level, they get to take a box. When a student passes the GED or earns a KEC, they get to take a box.

Veronica Gayle reported Owen County is trying managed enrollment with math classes. They have also started having structured orientation utilizing a PowerPoint presentation to advise students of expectations.

She noted over the past two years, Owen county has had a large number of low-level students with 35 in the past year alone. Most made their living growing tobacco. This group is particularly hard to retain, because they need to get work immediately. Owen County has started a program in which individuals sign a contract to commit to attending a certain number of days and hours and commit to a certain number of hours for homework. They get to select a “buddy,” someone who will be a positive force in their lives to assist with homework and to offer encouragement. When they reach a certain level, they get to choose a reward – it might be an Owen County Chamber of Commerce gift certificate (denominations of \$10, \$20, \$30 and \$50) or a Wal-Mart gift card. The gift certificates may be used at any business that is a member of the Chamber. The program began in January. At this time, her greatest success story is a gentleman who had to be assessed with the 9L form. He was at 2.9 in reading and 3.8 in math. They focused instruction on math and by March 1 he tested at a 6.0 in math.

Joan Flanery discussed the Read Right System that Ashland Community and Technical College has been piloting. It is a new way of teaching reading and writing focused on the theory that learning happens implicitly, so processes such as reading cannot be explicitly taught. The brain must be re-tooled by the environment to cause it to unconsciously figure out how to do it. The focus isn't on word identification, but rather the word anticipation. The program requires intensive training and is fairly costly, but after the second year of training, a trained person can serve as a trainer and you receive the full library of books. If a student shows up consistently, they can advance a reading level after eight to ten hours of work.

In order to help reach their GED goal, Boyd County is holding a GED OPT Blitz on three Saturdays in April at three locations throughout the county.

Ms. Flanery noted Wal-Mart helps support the Boyd County program. They use the funds to pay the GED test fee for high scoring examinees.

Cris Crowley noted in Hopkins County the majority of individuals in the assessment only category were in COMPASS prep or COMPASS remediation. ACE2 has developed a COMPASS preparation course in cooperation with Madisonville Community College to serve those students who would normally have fallen into the lowest level developmental education category. Madisonville Community College will no longer offer the three lowest developmental education courses. Instead, the individuals will be served by the adult education program.

She noted they have managed enrollment and structured classes with most class sizes in the 20-25 per class range, and numbers seems to be holding reasonably well.

Vicki Boyd reported Daviess County is using an orientation video and has changed the intake process. The system will still be an open system, but it will be driven through a more structured process.

They are giving the students opportunity to win items for achieving goals, based around a monthly theme. In March, the theme is "March Mathness" linking math and basketball. They incorporated sports trivia into instruction, decorated the center with basketballs and other sports items and gave students the opportunity to win items such as calculators.

Daviess County has started a Fast Track Math program.

The program is also closed one day a month for a staff meeting and professional development.

Sandy Moore reported with only three paid staff persons, they have focused attention on organizing and streamlining processes while retaining a focus on the student. They are utilizing a PowerPoint in a managed intake process. The first day the student spends with one specific person for orientation and assessment. This helps build rapport and improves retention. The next day the student is ready for the classroom. With limited staffing, Monroe County provides instruction for different subject areas on a structured schedule. They also have a computer lab available for students.

In Monroe County, 70 percent of the clients have children who qualify for free and reduced lunch, so money is an issue. They work with Community Action Agency and the Family Resource and Youth Services Center to help students pay the GED test fees.

Monroe County is working to assist incarcerated individuals not only to obtain the GED, but also to earn a KEC. In addition, the local superintendent wants classified employees – cooks, bus drivers, janitors – to raise their skill level and is promoting the KEC for those employees.

Peg Ramsey reported that Kenton County has concentrated on putting resources into teachers' hands. The college set up a special drive on the network server which houses all common lesson plans, syllabi, test banks, and other resources that are only accessible to the adult education staff.

Kenton County has two full-time centers and a variety of satellite sites. One full-time center has managed enrollment. The other center has open enrollment. The traditional campus center has open enrollment, with many students coming in at higher levels and able to move on the fast track to earn a GED. They then help students to set up COMPASS appointments and to see advisors. The Urban Corp center has managed enrollment. They offer classes in all five GED subject areas. In order to help students transition to postsecondary education, they have attendance policies and faculty service advisors (instead of case managers) to help mirror the college experience.

Ms. Russell has three persons who meet SACS credentialing. Adult education students are able to complete GED 100, the one-credit hour version of Introduction to College; because it is delivered by three teachers who volunteer to teach it outside of their regular duties. Students earn college credit for it.

Gateway Community and Technical College is the fiscal agent for VISTA (old Americorp program). Five of the college's 10 VISTA volunteers are assigned to adult education. One person works specifically on transitions issues. One VISTA volunteer works throughout the community on recruiting efforts. One VISTA volunteer is located at the housing authority. A VISTA volunteer is stationed at the health department focusing on health literacy issues. While VISTA volunteers sometimes require a lot of supervision, you would be amazed at the quality of persons that are sometimes signing up for VISTA. You have the VISTA for at least one year with many staying up to three years.

VISTA volunteers are allowed to take part in fundraising activities. They raise funds to pay cap and gown fees for GED graduates. GED graduates walk in the college commencement. They also use funds to support a staff retreat.

When Kenton County staff take part in professional development activities, they are required to make a presentation to other staff. Kenton County holds an annual staff retreat. Attendance is required for full-time employees and strongly encouraged for part-time employees. There are different strands – writing, math – essentially a mini-conference. Last year, staff participated in a four-day retreat focusing on the New Framework for Adult Education. This has helped to ensure the entire program benefits from the professional development activity and helps to stretch the professional development dollars.

Rodney Johnson reported that Russell County is similar in size to Monroe County, but unique due to the amount of industry. Three years ago, they made a commitment to build the credibility of adult education in the workplace. They were able to build rapport particularly with one company. The company statistics demonstrated that they had massive turnover in 2nd and 3rd shift employees. The company was only able to retain 30 percent of 3rd shift employees. Over the past three years, they have come to realize that of those employees who came to them with a KEC, only two had left with one leaving in good standing to take a better job.

The transition year gave them the opportunity to implement a pre-hire program. They approached the company, reminded them of the previous success with adult education students, and got them to recognize that if you can get someone to commit to spending a week in an adult education class covering a combination of soft skills, workplace math, workplace reading, and hopefully ending up with a KEC, but with no assurance of a job or even an interview, that it tells them something about a person's character. The company was given the choice of either a two-day or four-day pre-hire program. The company selected a four-day pre-hire program which resulted in a 30-hour program. Every person who wants to apply at this company must first complete the 30-hour program. Another company has since elected to participate. They average 12-15 persons per week. Some are adult education students and some are coded as workplace adult education. They pre-test and post-test individuals. Of those served, 15-20 percent do not have a GED; however, after being at the program for a week and seeing documented progress, many elect to continue working toward the GED. One of the two companies currently participating in the pre-hire program also requires a GED, so that is added incentive for individuals to continue after the initial program ends.

Russell County has begun collaborating with developmental education professors by assessing the individuals and offering a lab before, during and after instruction. This spring, they are holding four developmental math classes and one developmental writing class with plans to further enhance the collaboration.

Russell County has offered a two-week program focusing on math to help individuals prepare for the COMPASS test. At the end of the class, they assist the student in making an appointment to take the COMPASS test.

Russell County has implemented a managed orientation system. Individuals are required to participate in a 15-hour orientation program before they are enrolled into adult education. It has raised the level of expectations. Some individuals do not return after the initial visit, but those who do, stay longer and make gains.

Karen McLeod reported since Marshall County is rural with no public transportation and most students are employed, structured classes have not worked.

Marshall County requires a 480 average on the OPT before students are permitted to take the GED test. They make sure students know when they go that they will be able to pass the test. They explain to the student they will have to travel to another county, spend all day to take the test, pay \$40, make transportation arrangements, make child care arrangements, make work arrangements and they will most likely be dealing with nerves and fatigue, so the program wants to make sure the student knows when they take the test, they will be able to pass it. The GED pass rate is currently above 99 percent with students averaging a score of 530.

They have started a Fast Track GED program. They have only completed one session, but it looks promising.

Marshall County has been working on The Learning Connection, its version of the Skillmobile. The school board donated a surplus bus. A local plant donated \$2,000 worth of materials. Service learning money paid for some materials, because area vocational technical center students performed welding work, wired the bus and upgraded the computer lab. A staff member, who is also a substitute school bus driver, will drive the mobile classroom/computer lab. While they are still working on Internet connectivity issues, they plan to present the unit at the April school board meeting.

Marshall County has worked with the district court judge to create a program to offer sentencing alternatives for non-violent offenders – driving without insurance, bad checks, etc. Individuals voluntarily enter the program in lieu of fines and the offense will not appear on record. They pay a \$50 fee to the court. The program was given the opportunity to create the coursework which they tailor to fit the offense. For example, if an individual was involved in theft by deception, the adult education coursework is supplemented with financial literacy and money management instruction. They require a TABE pre-test and post-test in order to show progress. Individuals are advised they must demonstrate progress to the court.

Expense Vouchers

Members were asked to sign expense vouchers.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is June 20, 2008.